

National School Lunch Week

The Child Nutrition Program's roots date back all the way to 1853 when the Children's Aid Society of New York City started the very first feeding program in the United States, throughout the late 19th century and early 20th century more schools created programs to feed their students during the school day but it wasn't until June of 1946 that the National School Lunch Act was signed into law to permanently provide federal support for school lunch programs. When the law was first signed, funding for schools was based on enrollment and the per capita income of the state. But in 1962, the National School Lunch Act was amended to base funding for schools on participation in the program rather than enrollment in the schools. Consequently, Congress established National School Lunch Week on October 9th, 1962 to promote participation in the school lunch programs. Since then, National School Lunch Week has been celebrated by many schools around the country in October of each year.

This year, National School Lunch Week was October 14th-18th and the theme was "School Lunch Across the USA." The School Nutrition Association provides tools to schools such as activity sheets and puzzles for students, menu ideas and recipes for cooks and marketing resources for parents and administrators. The theme was meant to encourage schools to highlight foods from their region or to use different meals to teach students about foods from other regions of the country such as pineapple from Hawaii, California rolls, bison burgers, and Chicago style pizza to name a few.



Unfortunately for Montana, the celebration fell on a short school week for students with PIR days held on Thursday and Friday but that didn't stop schools from celebrating. Lynne Keenan in Browning, MT, invited parents to have school lunch with their students. Close to 100 parents participated! To fit the theme they served Hawaiian chicken rice bowls, Indian tacos and Barbeque chicken. The recipes were such a huge hit that the students requested the recipes be added to the 6 week menu cycle for regular school lunches! Way to Go Browning!

-Skye Watts, MDI Intern